



Representative Shirley Hankins

401 Legislative Building
P.O. Box 40600
Olympia, WA 98504-0600

Office: (360) 786-7882

E-mail: hankins_sh@leg.wa.gov

Committees:

Transportation, Vice chair
Rules
Capital Budget



2001 News & Views

March 2001

Dear Friends & Neighbors,

With the elections and the holidays now a distant memory, the state Legislature is in full swing. The 105-day session is crowded with important decisions to be made, so it was important that we hit the ground running.

The passage of recent ballot measures, including Initiatives 728 and 732, will be at the forefront of many questions this year - for their effect was to add more than \$750 million in education spending over the next two years alone.

State government includes three separate but interrelated fiscal plans: the General Fund budget, the Capital Budget and the Transportation Budget. Passing responsible budgets in all three areas are our most important tasks this year. Along the way, we will work to fund our schools, protect seniors and low-income families, and achieve new accountability measures so that taxpayers can see a return on their investments. We will also address a long-term strategy for Washington's transportation system - one that will reduce congestion, improve safety and enhance mobility to keep our economy strong.

Finally, we will consider a number of important issues facing the 8th District and our state, including water rights and the new shorelines regulations, the energy crisis, and reducing crime, especially among juveniles and in our schools. Please take a moment to learn more about these and other issues inside this newsletter. And, as always, please contact us with any questions or concerns.

Sincerely,

Shirley Hankins

Shirley Hankins

J L Delvin

Jerome Delvin



Representative Jerome Delvin

436 John L. O'Brien Building
P.O. Box 40600
Olympia, WA 98504-0600

Office: (360) 786-7986

E-mail: delvin_je@leg.wa.gov

Committees:

Juvenile Justice, Chair
Agriculture & Ecology
Technology, Telecommunications
& Energy



8th District

Toll-free: 1-800-562-6000

2001 News & Views

Juvenile justice issues will get the attention they deserve

Given the enormous budget-writing challenge we face this session, the programs that are intended to help our youth will face strong competition from the state's transportation and education needs for the limited tax dollars available. But in our experience, such efforts can be a wise investment, and we look forward to many positive results from the new House Juvenile Justice Committee.

In creating this committee, we have acknowledged that juvenile justice issues deserve to be considered separately from issues about adult offenders, our criminal laws as a whole, and other state laws concerning children.

"My goal as co-chair of the Juvenile Justice Committee is to secure funding for worthwhile juvenile justice programs that have been put on the chopping block in the governor's proposed budget," said Delvin. "Having served as a Richland police officer for more than 21 years - eight of which I spent as a Drug Abuse Resistance Education officer - I hope to bring real-world insights into the committee's work."

"I expect the committee will look to protect programs for at-risk youth and housing for runaways in crisis residential centers, both of which grew out of the "Becca Bill" we passed in 1995," said Hankins. "This is a great first step toward protecting our children, and keeping out of the cycle of crime and violence that has infected many parts of our nation."



Rep. Delvin serves as co-chair of the House Juvenile Justice Committee.

Water rules should be approved by your representatives

The regulation of Washington's water supply, and the conflicting demands on it, are making headlines like never before.

The Quad Cities of West Richland, Richland, Kennewick and Pasco have sued the state Department of Ecology over their application for water rights to support 50 years of growth.

One county judge ruled that conservancy boards, established by the Legislature to reduce water-rights gridlock, do not have the authority to transfer water from agricultural use to municipal use. Another judge told the Ecology Department to do a better job of enforcing its rule about water metering. Last summer, for the first time, water normally used for irrigation was diverted to help salmon, under a provision in the Endangered Species Act.

We know how important access to water is to the people of Benton County. A reliable water supply is crucial for irrigation, food processing, the river barges that take products to market, and electricity generation - not to mention our homes and businesses.

Our plan for the 2001 legislative session includes finding a solution for the question about conservancy board authority. We also will explore the creation of adequate water reserves off-stream to ensure that water is available for agriculture, salmon, homes and businesses.

Most importantly, we want to change the way state government makes the rules that affect you - and that includes regulations about water. Let's allow agencies like the Ecology Department to adopt rules, but let's also require those agencies to bring new rules before a review committee prior to their approval to give elected officials, not agency bureaucrats, the last word on regulations.

We need new sources of energy to make utilities more affordable

Between the Columbia and Snake river dams to the north, east and south, the Energy Northwest generating plant at Hanford and the history of rural electrification projects in our region, Mid-Columbia residents understand the importance of energy production and a stable, affordable energy supply.

The problem is simple: Washington simply does not have a clear energy policy, and it's critical that we work together to develop one. Where was the governor when the Secretary of Energy ordered the Pacific Northwest to sell power to sunny California in the middle of winter, when our businesses and homes needed it most? Why didn't he act to protect our energy supply instead of suggesting we turn down our thermostats?

Certainly, it is time, once and for all, to take the idea of removing Snake River dams off the table. Hydropower always has been, and remains, the most environmentally friendly and low-cost way to produce energy.

But as we knew last fall, our state no longer can rely so much on hydropower. That's why our agenda for the 2001 session includes incentives to encourage companies to build new, safe and clean power generating facilities in Washington. We also will work to



Shirley Hankins, working to craft Washington's energy policy.

develop more capacity to transmit power where it's needed most.

Demand for electricity has steadily risen, yet Washington hasn't made a major commitment to building new electricity-generating facilities since the 1970s. The governor instead

vetoed proposed tax incentives for companies to build power plants in our state, or upgrade their facilities to produce more energy. We sure could use that additional energy now.

Yes, we need to work together to conserve more energy, especially until this crisis is resolved. But what our state needs most are sustainable energy sources and bold leadership instead of excuses.

Reducing congestion, increasing safety, enhancing mobility

Have you ever been stuck in traffic so long you were late to work – or worse, late getting home to spend time with your family or friends? Or driven on a highway so deeply rutted that just steering your car was a problem – or hit a pothole so deep your car shook from the inside?

These are just some of the transportation problems we must address this year. The fact is, virtually every aspect of our lives in Washington depends at some level on transportation. Getting our children to school or soccer practice, getting ourselves to or from work, or getting our products, goods and services to the marketplace – and doing so safely and efficiently – is becoming a monumental task in our state. It is the result of an administration that has refused to admit we are facing a transportation crisis – and consequently, our inability to plan solutions on a long-term basis.

Our number one problem is securing a permanent funding source for transportation improvements. The 18th Amendment to the State Constitution already dedicates gas taxes to roads, but new funds still need to be identified.

This year, we will work to craft a plan that addresses congestion relief, safety and mobility – not only today, but in the future. Our goal is simple: to keep Washington moving. For the sake of our families, our jobs, and the opportunities we hope to leave our children, it is imperative that we find solutions to these problems now – before they get any worse!

THE 2001-03 BUDGET: Finding answers to tough questions

For the first time in nearly a decade, our state's economy appears to be slowing – and not just in the Puget Sound region. The rising cost of energy, excessive government intrusion and unreasonable and environmental regulations have dealt a serious blow to jobs and families in much of eastern Washington, including the 8th District. Now more than ever, we must pass a budget that is both responsible and effective.

As you know, Washington operates on a two-year (biennial) budget cycle – and this is another budget year for the Legislature. Just keeping government services operating at the level they are today will cost another \$1.6 billion this time (largely the result of higher health care and energy costs).

However, recent ballot initiatives have also taken their toll on the budget:

- I-722, which nullified all 1999 tax and fee increases, cost \$45 million
- I-728, aimed at cutting K-12 class sizes, reduced General Fund revenues by roughly \$450 million;
- I-732, which boosted public school teacher salaries, cost another \$345 million.
- And I-601, passed in 1993, restricts the growth of state government so that even maintaining existing services over the next two years would break the voter approved spending limits unless the initiative is amended by the Legislature.

Thankfully, these challenges also present a unique opportunity for legislators. We have the chance to cut back on useless or wasteful spending, hold state agencies more accountable for their budgets, eliminate duplicate or outdated programs, and truly change the way government does business.

Some will argue we should spend the emergency reserves. Others will advocate amending and raising the I-601 spending limit, thus allowing government to continue to grow. And still others will look first to increase taxes. We believe, however, that we should first look to pay for new projects or programs through efficiencies, savings, and other cost-cutting measures. Once these options have been exhausted, we should then carefully examine where we are and where we need to be – and this should be done well before we consider new taxes or fees.

8th District Town Hall!

Come and join State Reps.
Shirley Hankins & Jerome Delvin

March 17th

9:00 a.m. - 10:30 a.m. at Richland City Hall
11:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. at Kennewick City Hall

We want to hear from you!

PRESORTED
STANDARD
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
Washington State
Department of Printing

State Representatives
Jerome Delvin & Shirley Hankins
P.O. Box 40600
Olympia, WA 98504-0600